

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. – 20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously Presented) A wide area object tracking system comprising:

at least one primary base station and a pair of secondary base stations; each of said pair of secondary base stations being so coupled to said primary base station as to define a tag detecting cell; each of said primary and two secondary base stations being configured to receive a tag signal broadcast from a tag attached to an object to be tracked, yielding three received signals indicative of the location of said tag within said cell; whereby a plurality of overlapping said tag detecting cells in a given space would allow tracking objects at any place within said given space;

a central server coupled to said at least one primary base station; and

a tag recovery apparatus coupled to said central server

wherein said tag recovery apparatus includes a device to input a tag unlocking code, a tag depository compartment for receiving tags, and a guarantee ticket distributor to provide a guarantee ticket in exchange for a tag provided in said tag depository compartment.

22. (Original) A system as recited in claim 21, wherein said tag recovery apparatus is wirelessly coupled to said central server.

23. (Previously Presented) A system as recited in claim 21, wherein said tag including a rechargeable power source; said tag recovery apparatus being configured to recharge the power source.

24. (Cancelled).

25. (Previously Presented) A system as recited in claim 21, wherein said tag recovery apparatus being configured to forward information to said central server about tags received in said tag depository compartment.

26. (Previously Presented) A system as recited in claim 21, wherein said guarantee ticket being selected from the group consisting of cash and discount coupon.

27. (Original) A system as recited in claim 26, wherein said tag is rented and said guarantee ticket is issued in exchange for said rented tag.

28. (Previously Presented) A system as recited in claim 21, further comprising at least one tag to be attached to an object to be tracked; said at least one tag including a casing and attaching means releasably secured to said casing; said attaching means including a loop having two ends and being secured to said casing at one end and releasably mounted in said casing at its other end; said other end being releasably mounted in said casing via a releasable locking mechanism; said tag recovery apparatus being configured to receive a list of central server tag unlocking codes from said central server for comparison with inputted tag unlocking code both to be used in assessing if said releasable locking mechanism should be unlocked.

29. (Previously Presented) A system as recited in claim 21, wherein said tag recovery apparatus includes a display screen and a controller configured so as to display on said display screen a menu offering different form of retribution in exchange for tags.

30. – 87.(Cancelled)